THE INDYPENDENT

MIGRANT STORIES — P5 • DSA UNDER FIRE — P17

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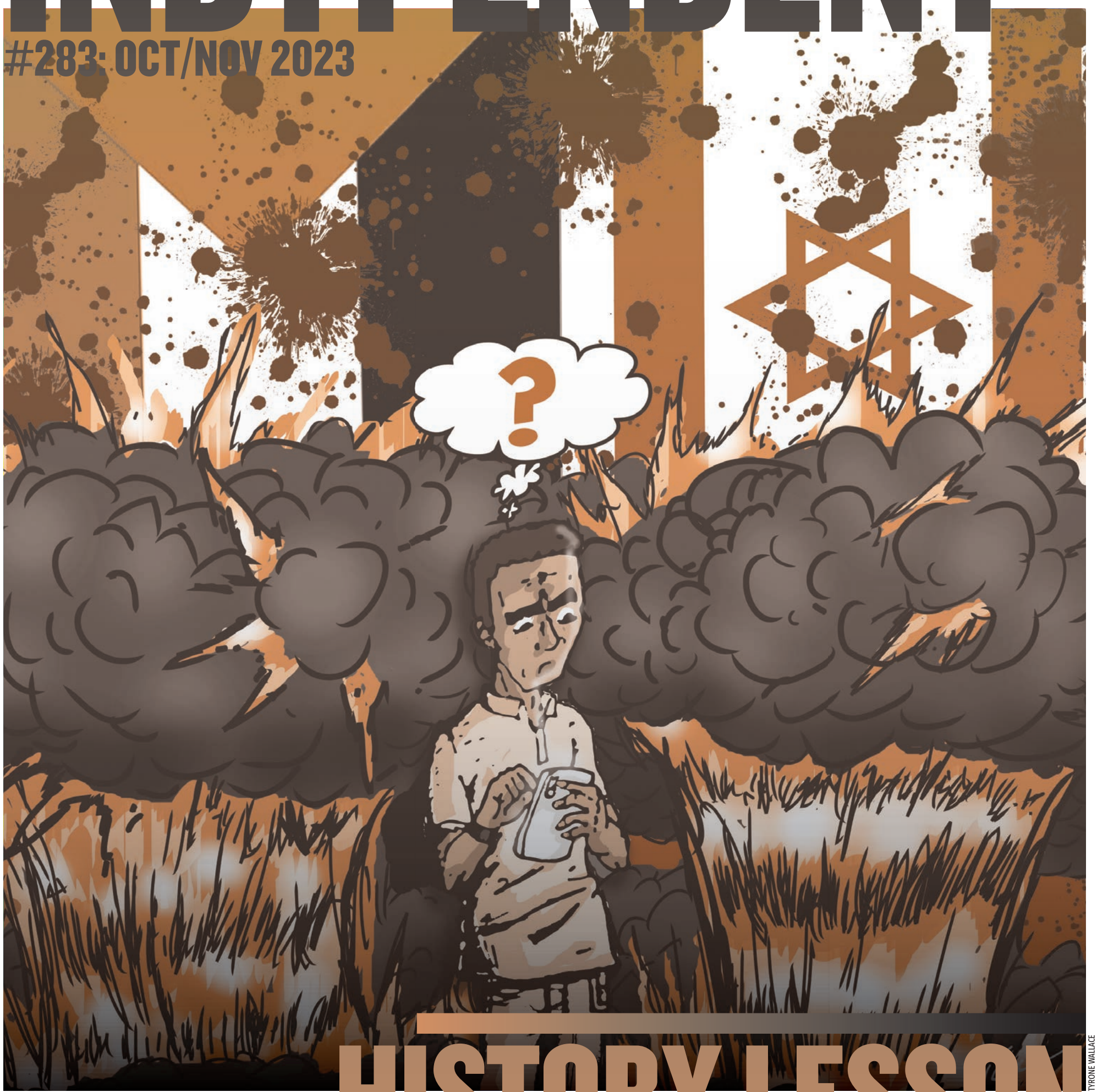

TYRONE WALLACE

HISTORY LESSON

OUR EASY-TO-FOLLOW GUIDE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

STARTS PAGE 10

THE INDYPENDENT

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388 Atlantic Avenue,
2nd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11217
917-426-4856
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CALENDAR EDITOR
Lane Dibler

INTERNS
Elias Guerra, Moses Jeanfrancois

GENERAL INQUIRIES:
contact@indypendent.org

SUBMISSIONS & NEWS TIPS:
submissions@indypendent.org

ADVERTISING & PROMOTION:
ads@indypendent.org

VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTORS
Linda Martín Alcoff, Eleanor J. Bader, Bennett Baumer, Nina Berman, Laura Jane Brett, Sue Brisk, Peter Carellini, Olga Federova, Renée Feltz, Lynne Foster, Esteban Guerra, Theodore Hamm, Nancy Hoch, David Hollenbach, Manvi Jalan, Josh Joseph, Milo Keough, Christine Larsen, Derek Ludovici, Ash Marinaccio, Gary Martin, Reverend Billy, John Teufel, Tyrone Wallace, and Keating Zelenke.

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COURTESY

NOVEMBER

SAT NOV 4 • 3PM–5PM • FREE
SCIENCE AGAINST CAPITALISM: *EXITING THE CLIMATE CRISIS*
Climate scientist Mara Freilich will discuss biogeochemical cycling in aquatic ecosystems, climate modeling, and the role that community science and multi-sector collaboration can play in building climate solutions. *Exiting the Climate Crisis* aims to connect science education with people and movements rejecting capitalism's destructive path.
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM
320 W 37 St., Manhattan

SAT NOV 4 • 9:30AM–12PM • FREE
GREENHOUSE HARVEST FESTIVAL
Just because Halloween may have passed does not mean that the autumnal spirit has gone. The Horticultural Society of New York is providing family fun activities and seasonal sweet treats for all participants in this year's Greenhouse Harvest Festival. Take the fun home with a hand-picked pumpkin or a screen-printed poster. Prizes await for the winners of a scarecrow-making contest. Bring your creativity and a bag to bring home all the harvest fun!
THE GREENHOUSE & EDUCATION CENTER AT RIVERBANK STATE PARK
679 Riverside Dr., Manhattan

FRI OCT 27–FRI NOV 10 • FREE–$70
FILM: WORKERS UNITE FILM FESTIVAL
The 12th year of the The Workers Unite Film Festival kicks off on Oct. 27 at Cinema Village theater until Nov. 2, then continues at other partner venues, such as The People's Forum and SUNY ESC. See powerful films on the welfare rights movement, The farmer-labor movement, gentrification in New York City, female Jazz musicians and so much more. Many of the films offer a Q&A after the program with filmmakers. Stand up for global labor solidarity! Program listings and tickets can be found on the festival's eventbrite page.
CINEMA VILLAGE THEATER
22 E 12 St., Manhattan

TUE NOV 7 • 9AM–12:30PM • FREE
WORKSHOP: *IN DEFENSE OF TEACHING BLACK STUDIES: READING, WRITING & JUSTICE*
Professional learning and workshops about Black studies – with guest speakers,Kimberlé Crenshaw and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, book giveaways, and primary sources for teaching.
SCHOMBURG CENTER
515 Malcolm X Blvd., Manhattan

NOV 9–NOV 26 • THU, FRI, SAT @ 8 PM; SUN @ 3 PM • $20
THEATER: ENOUGH VO5 FOR THE UNIVERSE
Directed By: Melanie Maria Goodreaux
Enough Vo5 for the Universe by Melanie Maria Goodreaux, is a science fiction dark comedy that takes place in the year 2097. Three African-American female survivors of an unnamed worldwide cataclysm strive to exercise control in a dystopian environment where there is no control. Run Time: 1 hour 30 minutes
THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY
155 First Ave, Manhattan

FRI NOV 10 • 7PM–10PM • SUGGESTED DONATION $15
MUSIC: *SOUND OFF! MUSIC FOR BAIL*
Sound Off! Music for Bail will feature a string quartet performing works by Angelica Negron, inti figgis-vizueta, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson and more! The show will be in support of special speaker Tatiana Hill from the City Office of the Community Liaison. Sound Off will have two open rehearsals that same day from 11 a.m.–2 p.m., and 3 p.m. –5 p.m. No RSVP is required to attend either rehearsals or the show.
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM
320 W 37 St., Manhattan

MON NOV 13 • 3PM–3:45PM • FREE
AUTHORS IN THE AFTERNOON: BOOK TALK
Be a part of the conversation with Jelani Cobb (*The New Yorker,* Dean of Columbia Journalism School) and Rob Eschmann (Columbia University, Harvard University) for a discussion of Eschmann's new book, *When the Hood Comes Off: Racism and Resistance in the Digital Age*. After the moderated conversation, stay and talk informally with Dr. Eschmann.
CENTER FOR BROOKLYN HISTORY
128 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn

NOV 24–DEC 10
FILM: AFRICAN DIASPORA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Catch the best new films from the African diaspora at this year's 31st annual African Diaspora International Film Festival. The films will be screened at five venues: Schomburg Center, Leonard Nimoy Thalia Theater, Teachers College, Cinema Village Theater and AMC Magic Johnson/Harlem 9.
For more, see nyadiff.org

TUE NOV 28 • 8PM • $15–20
FILM: AFRICAN WOMEN FILMMAKERS
The night will include a double feature of *Otiti*, a Nigerian-produced film and Big *Little Women*, an Egyptian-produced film. A panel discussion with the directors of both films will be held following the viewing. Tickets can be purchased at nyadiff.org.
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
525 W 120 St., Manhattan

CINEMA: Mama Africa: Miriam Makeba *will play at Cinema Village on December 3 as a part of the African Diaspora International Film Festival.*

THU NOV 30 • 8PM • FREE
HONEY, I QUEERED THE NARRATIVE BOOK CLUB
Want to build community and discover a shared history with your LGBTQIA+ peers? This month, the book club will discuss Soraya Chemaly's *Rage Becomes Her: The Power of Women's Anger*, an 'utterly eye opening' (*Bustle*) book that gives voice to the causes, expressions and possibilities of female rage.
MCNALLY-JACKSON BOOKS
445 Gold St, Brooklyn

THRU JAN 21 • 7PM–10PM • PAY WHAT YOU WISH ON FRIDAY
ART EXHIBIT: *HENRY TAYLOR: B SIDE*
Henry Taylor's view of the everyday moments and people in the United States is grounded in the experiences of his own community incarceration, poverty and police brutality.
THE WHITNEY MUSEUM
99 Gansevoort St., Manhattan

THRU DEC 10 • 10AM–5PM • NY RESIDENTS PAY WHAT YOU WISH
ART EXHIBIT: *ART FOR THE MILLIONS: AMERICAN CULTURE AND POLITICS IN THE 1930'S*
View over 100 works of art, music and dance on display showcasing the power of great political strife and the birth of a powerful labor-rights movement.
THE MET
1000 Fifth Ave, Manhattan

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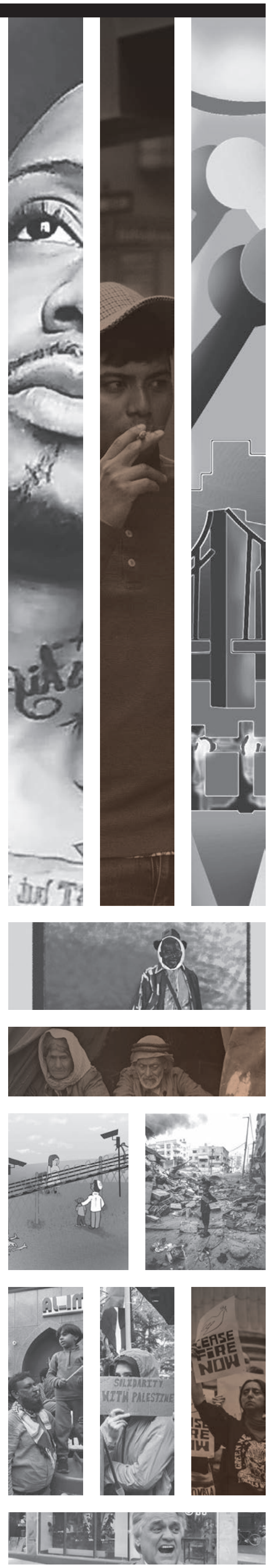

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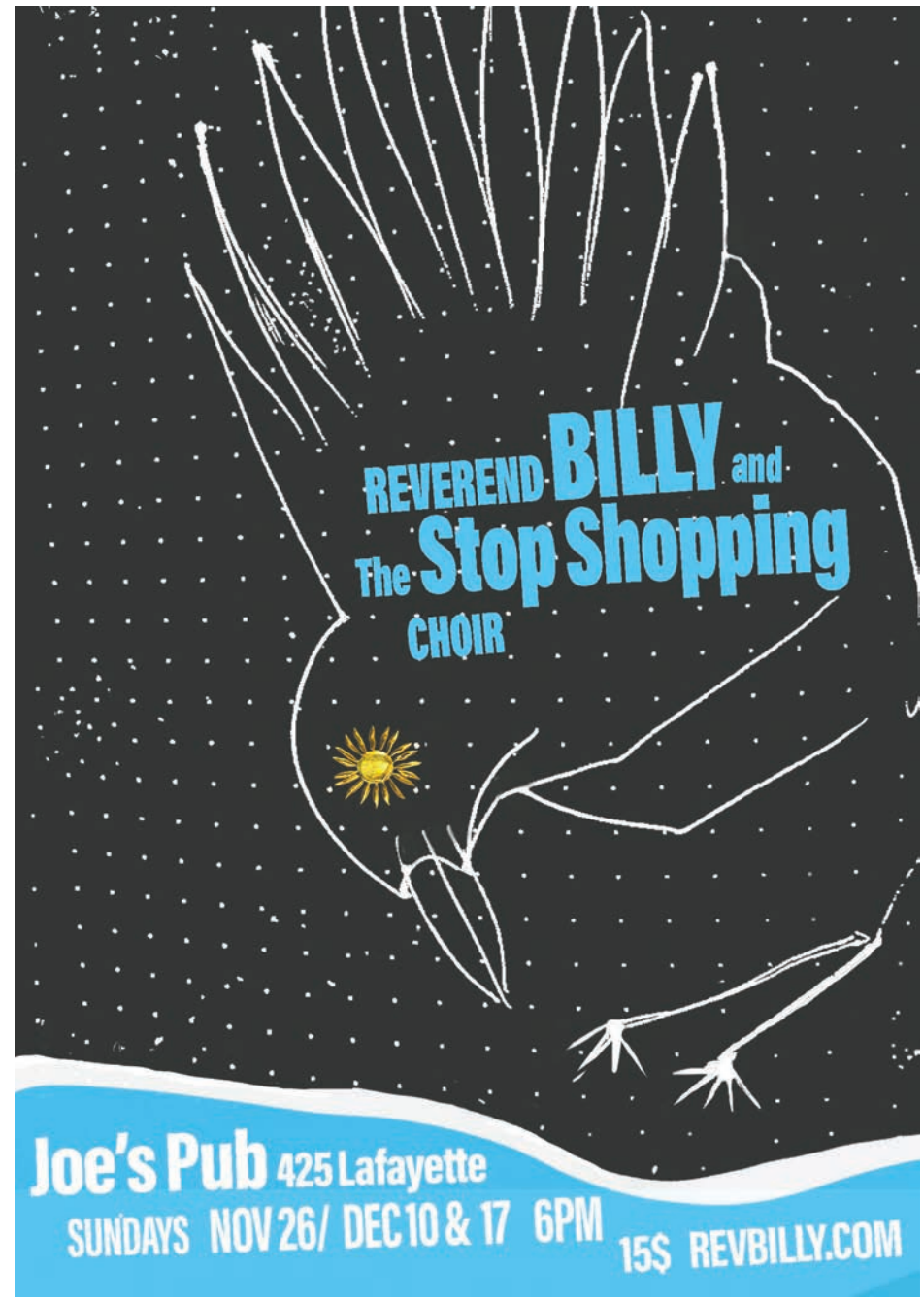

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NO JUSTICE: *for Kawaski Trawick.*

NYC BRIEFS

BY INDYPENDENT STAFF

KAWASKI TRAWICK KILLER COPS CLEARED, FAMILY BLAMES 'RIGGED' SYSTEM

A New York Police Department official has recommended dismissing departmental excessive-force charges against the two officers involved in the 2019 killing of Kawaski Trawick. Deputy Commissioner Rosemarie Maldonado's Sep. 20 draft decision said that because the Civilian Complaint Review Board had not filed the charges within the two-year statute of limitations, she could only rule on whether the two had committed criminal assault. The NYPD had taken 19 months to give the CCRB the officers' body-camera footage. Trawick, 32, was shot four times within two minutes after the two cops entered his apartment in a Bronx supportive-housing building for people with mental-health problems. Ellen Trawick, Kawaski's mother, called the result "rigged." Police Commissioner Edward Caban will make the final decision on whether to discipline the two officers.

TOP MAYORAL ADVISER GOES ON MIGRANT-SHELTER RAMPAGE

Mayor Eric Adams' top adviser for overseeing immigrant shelters is being investigated for two Oct. 17 incidents in which he tried to bull his way into shelters. Witnesses told *The City* that when the adviser, retired city police officer Timothy Pearson, was asked for identification by a security guard at a shelter on West 31st Street, he told her to "get the fuck out of my way" and shoved her, setting off a melee. Two guards were arrested. Earlier that afternoon, Pearson had arrived at a Randall's Island shelter accompanied by over 100 police officers, plus two drones and a helicopter overhead, according to an incident report obtained by *The City*. Pearson said they were looking for four people who had assaulted an officer, and threatened to have the site manager fired for demanding that he show a warrant. Police sealed off roads to the island.

WHEN YOU DON'T TAKE MASS TRANSIT SERIOUSLY

The city Taxi and Limousine Commission announced Oct. 18 that it will end its cap on issuing new licenses for for-hire vehicles as long as the new cars are fully electric. "This is how we also support hard-working entrepreneurs with green jobs," Mayor Eric Adams said at a press conference. The city had imposed the limits in 2018 after the number of app-based taxis on city streets grew to more than 70,000. Traffic engineer Sam Schwartz told *Gothamist* the additional cabs might impair the MTA's impending congestion-pricing program, which is intended to reduce traffic and pollution in Manhattan by limiting entry south of 60th Street to drivers who can afford to pay fees of up to $23. "The city's about to flood the streets with cars, while the state is looking to rein in the number of cars on the streets," New York Taxi Workers Alliance head Bhairavi Desai said. "And both are being done at the expense of the drivers."

FEDERAL JUDGE SHOOTS DOWN CITY GUN REGS

A Manhattan federal judge ruled Oct. 24 that parts of New York City's gun-licensing regulations violated the Second and Fourteenth Amendments. Judge John P. Cronan held that requiring applicants for firearm permits to prove they have "good moral character" was a "broad and unrestrained" standard not "consistent with the Nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation." Joseph Srour of Brooklyn had challenged the regulations after police rejected his applications for gun permits on the grounds that his failure to disclose that he had been arrested for attempted murder, plus having had his driver's license revoked six times and suspended 24 times, showed "poor moral judgment and an unwillingness to abide by the law." The "historical tradition" standard comes from the Supreme Court's 2022 decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association vs. Bruen*, which struck down the state's tight requirements for licenses to carry a pistol, saying that gun controls are generally unconstitutional unless there were comparable laws on the books in 1790.

MOSES JEANFRANCOIS

ONE DAY AT A TIME: *A migrant smokes a cigarette in front of the Roosevelt Hotel in mid-Manhattan.*

'NOTHING FEELS PERMANENT'

AFTER TRAVELING THOUSANDS OF MILES, MIGRANTS FIND AN UNCERTAIN EXISTENCE IN NYC

By Moses Jeanfrancois & Amba Guerguerian

It's been more than a century since waves of mostly European immigrants escaping war and hunger entered America through Ellis Island. The city's new immigrants are also desperate; they have come fleeing state and gang violence and resource scarcity.

Since June 2022 when Texas and Arizona began busing people from refuges on the southern U.S. border to New York City, nearly 130,000 migrants have arrived here. A recent additional influx of West and North African asylum seekers that didn't arrive as a part of the busing program have added to the numbers.

According to the City, it has opened 210 emergency shelters (some are converted hotels). Seventeen of these are "large-scale humanitarian relief centers," a share of which are huge pop-up tents in faraway corners of the city. Asylum seekers are not mixed with homeless New Yorkers. They are often placed in "respite centers," which provide less food and services and often don't follow other *Calahan* right-to-shelter rules, like maintaining a certain amount of space between cots.

Mayor Adams has denounced a 1979 court ruling that New Yorkers have a "right to shelter" under the state constitution. The mayor is appealing to the state's highest court to reverse this right, and has set rules that migrants can't stay in shelters for more than 60 days.

Often being moved around the city from one temporary stay to another, New York's new immigrants are struggling to stabilize themselves with jobs and housing. Many of them either spend their days near the shelter or out looking for work and legal assistance. While some have been able to find day-to-day, under-the-table gigs, many don't want to work illegally for fear of being deported back to the country they oftentimes fled.

We spoke to many recently-arrived migrants for this piece, most of them declining to go on the record. The dominant concern voiced in these conversations was the desire to work. While many may qualify for asylum or Temporary Protected Status, the process to get a working permit can take months or in extreme cases, years.

"Ask the government, since we are here, why are they giving us food, shelter, but not letting us work? We could support ourselves if we just got working permits!" a Mauritanian refugee said.

Maybe you know some newcomers. But if not, you have seen them — spraying your rims at the 24-hour car wash, selling snacks on the subway, waiting for house-cleaning or construction work in groups on the sidewalk. If you might speak their language, try welcoming them. They are New Yorkers, like us, immigrants, after all.

Here are some of their stories.

Interviews have been edited for length and clarity.

MARGELIS CARREÑO • Venezuela

I arrived here in May. They gave me a 28-day hotel and then a permanent hotel, but because my husband got a job in Pennsylvania, our expectation was that we would also go with him. That job did not materialize; so he returned to New York City, and they put us here as a family at the Roosevelt Hotel; they told us that in three days they were going to transfer us, but a month and four days have passed.

We received the notification this morning that they were going to transfer us to a temporary hotel and that we have 28 days to leave there or come back and apply again.

Nothing coming our way feels permanent; we go for 28 days and then become uncertain again; you have to move again. Many people see us and may even criticize the number of bags I carry, but I have three children, the cold is coming, and the bags contain things for school — so many things that are needed — especially here because it is quite cold.

My children go to school near Central Park, and they were just going to send us to Queens but I asked for something closer. Now they're sending us to the Bronx, but looking it up on the GPS, I'll have to spend an hour and 27 minutes traveling to take my children to school

It is a quite difficult situation, but until we find another solution, we have to keep trusting in God and seeking out shelters, because we are waiting for our work permits which haven't arrived.

I am looking for a job, but with the current work-permit situation and the not-so-good reputation that Venezuelans have. It becomes quite complicated since they call us all bad, but that is not the case. We didn't come to stay in a shelter and live off the State.

My husband was working for a week in construction, which is basically what migrant men can do sometimes to get a job. He already did the work, and they have not paid him yet, and we insist on payment, but they still do not give us a response.

DIAYE • Mauritania

I didn't know anybody. I just had one address in New York, so I came. They gave me the address en route somewhere between Barcelona and Bogota, because I fled my country. The police were harassing me for having a delivery business without the correct permitting. I had to sell it to leave. I also had to sell my dowry, leaving everything behind.

I have two children. The girl is five and the boy is one and a half. I sent them to live with my parents in Senegal.

I came to ask for asylum. We don't have freedom in Mauritania. There's slavery in Mauritania. There's nothing there for us. The government is against us, the Black people; it's very racist there. There's not a lot of sense there.

EDWIN • Nicaragua

The political situation in my country, well, the government — I had a state job … I worked at the airport. I was in favor of the government, but then things changed when it began to be in power for more than four years and began to take over state jobs. [My coworkers] began circulating rumors that I was not an ally of the government.

The City sent me to a shelter in Staten Island, and then they [were forced] to send me here because it didn't have hot water. But here [at the West 31st Street shelter] the issue is that here they only allow you to shower every other day, as in there is no bathroom to shower in. They send you to bathe at the Stewart hotel nearby.

They opened a process at the Red Cross here on 49th and 10th to do the asylum application. And later I will be able to apply for a work permit.

I don't like being in this situation, the problem is if you go to a place to look for a place to rent, they want to scam you. They ask you for a lot of money, and they tell you 'Okay, deposit this money in my account,' and then you lose it. They scammed me.

I don't want to be sent from one shelter to another, so I found a person in California that is going to offer me an apartment. The bad thing is that now all my processes are going to be delayed because I have to transfer them to California.

ANONYMOUS • Mauritania

When I went to turn myself in at the border for asylum, I spent two months in detention in Arizona. It's just like prison, but it's not prison. You're not allowed to call it that.

I like New York better. It's the city; there's a lot going on. There it's nothing, just a big cell and you cannot leave.

It's been four months since I crossed the border. I came here to ask for asylum from the government, but I don't know what they're gonna do. We don't have the means to get lawyers. We go traveling all around the city, and sometimes you run into somebody who wants to help you. And they'll tell you this is where the lawyers are. But we don't have any money to pay for the lawyers.

In the detention center they gave me and everybody a list of free lawyers [in each state]. So that's mostly the resource I have currently.

TYRONE WALLACE

MUTUAL AID GROUPS MEET T MIGRANT MOME

A CITYWIDE NETWORK OF RADICAL COLLECTIVES FILLS THE VOID CREATED BY CITY'S FALTERING RESPONSE

By Amba Guerguerian

On a quiet side street two blocks from a J train subway station in the heart of Bushwick, around 500 migrants live on Stockton Street in a "respite center," a low-budget version of a homeless shelter begrudgingly provided by a city government that wishes they weren't here.

The center's conditions are bleak: seven stories of unfinished concrete. Four floors are covered in row after row of cots adorned with blankets that only partially cover the body, say the residents, who have never experienced a cold winter before. The men there receive one airplane-style pre-cooked meal per day, plus water and fruit, and have little access to social services. Respite centers and other temporary shelters erected during the migrant crisis don't have to follow the same rules as shelters run by the Department of Homeless Services.

"It's not so easy to talk to each other in there; it's not comfortable," said Michael, a Mauritanian refugee. "You always have to be quiet because someone is sleeping."

Some of them regularly make their way across the street to the Brooklyn Community Farm, a communal garden where local residents grow food and host events. The BCF functions as one node in the Mutual Aid Collective, a citywide network of grassroots groups that seeks to fill the void created by the city's faltering response to the nearly 130,000 migrants that have arrived in New York City since the spring of 2022.

On Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, migrants as well as other low-income neighborhood residents line up around the block in front of BCF to receive basic food staples: beans, rice, chicken, bread, fruits and vegetables. While most of them take the food home, a group of mostly West African migrants from across Stocton street take their food into the garden, prepare a meal together, and enjoy each other's company in a green space where they feel welcomed.

"We find ourselves here and we speak the same languages, we are able to converse in comfort," Michael said. "It's family."

• • •

The origins of the Mutual Aid Collective (MAC) date back to the harrowing early days of the COVID-19 pandemic when various neighborhood groups such as South Bronx Mutual Aid, Washington Square Park Mutual Aid and Buschwick Ayuda Mutua formed to deliver essential supplies to their homebound and homeless neighbors. The George Floyd protests in June of 2020 brought an additional surge of energy and volunteers into these groups which root their work in ideals of mutual aid and decentralized leadership that empowers participants to become more fully involved.

The mutual-aid groups continued to be active in their local communities and stayed in touch with each other after the protests lost momentum. When Republican governors on the southern U.S. border began sending busloads of migrants to large, liberal cities last year, the mutual aid groups' nimble organizational style proved well-suited to respond to the urgent needs of the migrants.

"The mutual-aid groups were the first ones out there at Port Authority when the migrants started arriving, because we had been in communication with people around the country, and we knew they were coming," said a MAC member who asked to remain anonymous. "For the first few days, it was mostly mutual aid there, giving out resources and welcoming people, and suggesting people go to those Midtown hotels and claim their right to shelter."

Now officially more than a year old, the collective has become a little-noticed pillar of the city's response to the migrant influx. There are more than 20 groups and several faith leaders associated with MAC

THE ENT

as well as individuals who don't belong to any organization. It has over 500 participants across several organizing and volunteer chat groups, some of which are site- or language-specific.

Kitchens and restaurants, like La Morada in the South Bronx, which donates hundreds of meals per week, are also involved with MAC, as are groups that assist as needed like Bodega, the roving mutual-aid truck which can carry large amounts of cargo.

Some groups are heavily involved, but hold less concrete functions. For example, NYC ICE Watch, which formed in 2020 "in response to the imminent threat of the Trump-era ICE raids," serves as the security arm of the collective. If someone is being harassed at their shelter, by the police, or by right-wing "trolls," NYC ICE Watch steps in as a buffer, or it might provide security at a mutual aid event. The group also hosts know-your-rights trainings and helps to organize childcare for MAC events.

"It's not a rigid structure where you have to get a certain amount of hours," says Ariadna Phillips, a leader with South Bronx Mutual Aid. "The mentality is that we are at our core lay people. We're neighbors helping neighbors. You step in and step back according to your needs and abilities."

MAC is circumspect about promoting itself to the broader public. It doesn't need to raise large sums of money nor does it need to impress philanthropic foundations. New Yorkers who come into contact with MAC mostly do so through word of mouth or by encountering someone from the group during one of its distributions.

South Bronx Mutual Aid organizers, some of which are familiar with software design, released a web-based app it developed called AyudaNYC in August. It is accessible in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Arabic. It offers users six options: Work & Education, Send Message, Find Medical Access, Find Food, Find Clothing and Find Shelter. Collective members that are plugged into the back end of the app receive incoming requests and then begin a triage process in order to figure out how the service request can be best met.

While MAC receives more requests than it can fulfill, it is able to meet some of the most pressing needs of hundreds of people per week. Under the aegis of the collective, distributions take place at shelters and at other community spaces, like gardens and parks. MAC members collect and disperse tangible resources — primarily food, clothing, blankets and hygiene products, but also items like phones and bicycles.

"We actually need people with more storage space right now. And we need people with cars," says 2Pac, a member of NYC ICE Watch.

MAC relies on donations from individuals and groups (religious congregations, charities, schools, restaurants, other businesses) that are plugged into its social media or other communication channels. In times of necessity, which occur frequently, collective members will donate out-of-pocket or out-of-closet.

In addition to the sharing of food, clothing and supplies, MAC events feature cooking, the sharing of music, hair cutting, child care, sports, political education. The collective also responds to requests for resources and referrals for legal, medical, housing and family-reunification assistance.

Resources are primarily distributed to recently-arrived migrants who have nowhere else to turn, but to other New Yorkers in need as well. Because the collective is embedded in communities and is able to respond in real time to requests that come in through its app, it can often be more responsive and provide a human touch that larger, more bureaucratic organizations cannot.

"Most of our members either are migrants or come from migrant families," Philips told *The Indypendent*. Many of the people who learn about MAC for assistance go on to become a part of it. "The conversation has been had many times, 'Yes, but we operate differently. We work hand-in-hand, collectively.' Some people are for it and some people are not.

"For anybody that is living the experience of certain difficulties or oppressions, you're almost guaranteed to find others in your situation. It becomes a decision if you want to band with those people or not. ... But if you look out for each other, you have far more strength in numbers."

"Nobody that is inside of a shelter takes orders from us," Phillips added. "This mechanism of support suggests that the person being served does some work themselves. For example if you're in a shelter, if we bring donations, can you make sure they get distributed to other people in your shelter, get organized?"

In this case, the reciprocal exchange is one of tangible resources for intangible ones, such as expanding the organization's reach and providing it with information about where its services are most useful.

"How else would we know what people need? Ariadna asked. "Or what it looks like inside of a shelter?"

• • •

Mars, a volunteer at Bushwick Community Farm, mans distributions at the garden. "This guy reached out to us saying he got a connect with Whole Foods to bring over a truckload of prepared foods that would be tossed. So he's renting a UHaul tomorrow, and that means we will have an extra distribution day this week, of already-cooked food this time," said Mars on Wednesday in mid-October.

Mars is originally from Quebec; he speaks French and some Spanish and is able to communicate with most of the migrants that frequent BCF. He found out about a free dentist in the Bronx, the phone number of which he has been passing around to BCF visitors. Each Wednesday, he and a group of migrants travel on the subway to participate in soccer games organized by the Woodbine, an anarchist collective in Ridgewood, Queens.

"The guys were playing in barefeet, so Woodbine did a fundraiser. People gave $1,200 for cleats," Mars said. But instead of buying a pair of cleats for each migrant in the rotating group that participates in soccer night, Mars found a wholesaler who would sell him discounted cleats, "and the guys said, 'just get 24 pairs'" for whoever is participating any given week. "So they share the cleats, and now we have [around] $1,000 to spend on winter coats and warm blankets."

As newly-arrived migrants are sent to the Stockton Street respite center, longer-tenured residents are sent in droves to a makeshift tent city on Randall's Island. But, residents told *The Indy* that center workers tend to acquiesce when someone refuses transfer, which some migrants have done in order to retain community at BCF.

It should come as no surprise that the migrants are highly adaptable and are able to relate to the improvisational, non-bureaucratic style of activism embodied by the Mutual Aid Collective. They did, after all, traverse half the world in order to make it to safer ground. Many fled politically-dire situations in their home countries, sometimes leaving just after a near one was killed.

"Here we speak everything, a little bit of anything," says Michael, who is an active member of the BCF mutual aid group and speaks six languages, including Chinese, because he worked for Chinese companies for 10 years in Mauritania. Government oppression back home is severe. "I was part of an opposition political party," he recalls. "We were persecuted for critiquing the dictatorship, the prisons, the slavery, the lack of freedom. Some of us were killed."

Like Michael, John, from Senegal, plays an active role at the semi-weekly distributions. He is an unofficial leader of the group of dozens of West African migrants that frequently cross the street to visit BCF. He makes sure each member of the group does their part with cooking and cleaning at the garden. He also helps settle disputes. Even while he was being interviewed by *The Indy*, two men approached him to help solve an argument about a cell phone. He hears out one man, then the next, and continues to do that until they've found common ground. John's success rate? Almost 100%, he says. "Once they come to me, that means they're ready to resolve the issue."

John's leadership role occurred naturally. In Senegal, he was part of a family of traveling shepherds that had herded sheep for generations. He has traveled through many West African villages, learning to get comfortable quickly in a variety of settings, and speaks eight languages. But due to increasing robbery and violence on the route, John had to flee. Rebel fighters had killed his grandfather. "It was the moment to leave. I felt that if I don't, I will lose my life," he said.

"We prefer to prepare our own food and eat in community," said John after we and others shared a mound of Senegalese food from the same plate, as is custom.

Hearing the warm chatter in Wolof, Poular, French and Arabic, and eating chicken and rice with my hands, I felt momentarily like we were no longer each separately trying to make our way through the cut-throat concrete jungle just to survive. It is the nimble ability of migrant communities — to improvise, and, in their rag-tag fashion, make you feel like you are home, that you are welcome — that has both driven the Mutual Aid Collective, and made this city livable for so many.

Interviews with Michael and John (which are pseudonyms) have been translated from French by the author.

PINCHE PAPERWORK

As of Oct. 13, 126,700 migrants had entered the NYC shelter system since June 2022, with an average of approximately 250 people arriving daily, and over 64,100 migrants were in the city's care.

The vast majority of those migrants are refugees that plan to file for political asylum, which they have one year to do after crossing the U.S. border. If they don't, they will be deportable. One-hundred-and-fifty days after they apply for asylum, they can apply for a working permit. Additionally, migrants that arrive from countries under Temporary Protected Status (TPS), like Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, and Venezuela, can apply to stay and work in the United States temporarily, but they have to apply for work permits.

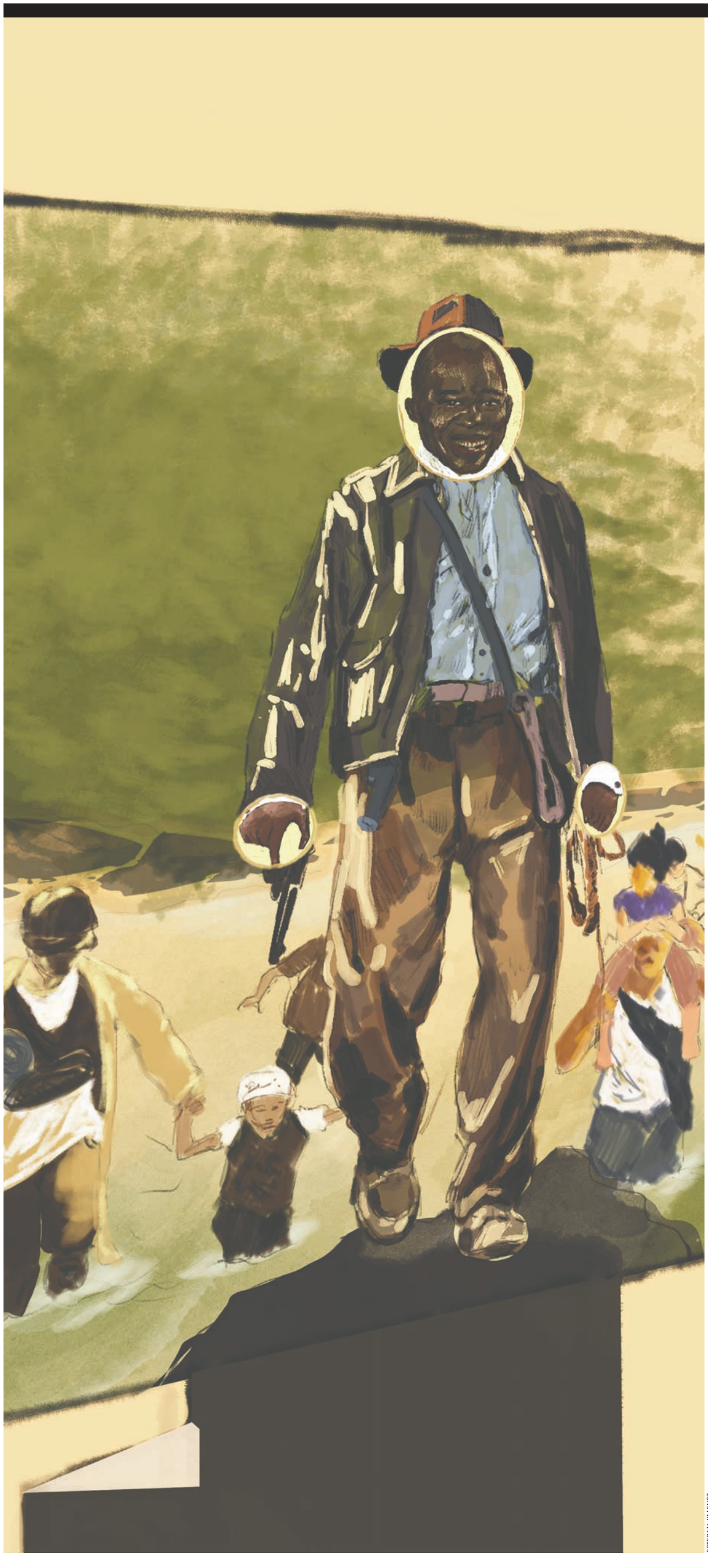
The application processes for both asylum and TPS claims are arduous. They require scrutiny, evidence retrieval, translation, hours of time and months of waiting.

As of Oct. 18, just 2,100 migrants had applied for work permits – with not a single one yet to receive federal approval, according to the city in a press conference.

In July, the Adams administration quietly launched an asylum application help center at the Red Cross headquarters in Midtown. As of Oct. 19, more than 5,600 asylum applications had been filed, or about 75 per day.

Local officials say TPS could benefit 15,000 Venezuelans in New York City's care. But according to* The City*, the help center has only filed 300 TPS applications so far.

– AMBA GUERGUERIAN



ESTEBAN JIMENEZ

MAYOR'S MIGRA PHOTO OPP FLO

"WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?" MIGRANTS ASK AS ADAMS MAKES TROPICAL TOUR

By Laura Carlsen

MEXICO CITY — The general reaction to Mayor Eric Adams' visit to Mexico, especially from actual migrants in the vicinity of his numerous press events, was "What's he doing here?"

That's a good question. Adams traveled in early October to Mexico, Ecuador and Colombia, at least in part paid for with public money, despite the fact that one of his main talking points was that his city can't afford to receive asylum seekers. Although he avoided saying outright — "Don't come!" — he wasn't far off. Adams told the press that migrants were victims of "false hopes," warned of the "American dream becoming a nightmare" and stressed that his city does not have the resources to receive more people. Ecuadorian media reported that he referred to immigration as a "global threat" and an "aggressive virus." He was met with protesters in Colombia en route to the dangerous jungle crossing of the Darien Gap, carrying signs reading "Immigrants are not a photo op."

Compared to Republican hate rhetoric, Adams mixes concern with dissuasion, walking a fine line between recognizing the plight of individual migrants and vilifying their numbers. On his Latin American trip, the mayor carried the same baggage of prejudice, prevarication and political grandstanding. By taking the useless message of "stay home" to thousands of families facing life-threatening violence, hunger or displacement, he reinforced the divisions and misconceptions that the Republican Party uses to mobilize the most racist and xenophobic elements of its base.

As elections heat up, immigration is bringing Republicans and Democrats closer together in the worst possible way — a shared narrative that criminalizes victims of forced migration as the cause of U.S. ills. Texan Republican Gov. Greg Abbott ships thousands of asylum seekers to New York, and Democrat Adams takes up the baton saying they "will destroy New York City." Politicians in both parties have been mining the Republican-created niche of immigrant-bashing for months.

They portray immigrants as the problem and not the symptom of the problem. But immigration to the United States today is not discretionary; it's predominantly forced migration, in some cases with whole families leaving overnight to save their lives. Migrants don't need Adams to tell them about the dangers on the trail — they know. Elaborate networks of internal communication inform constantly regarding the safest routes, what to avoid and how, and where one can find succor and support. It's critical to survival.

The situation in each country of origin differs somewhat, but the causes of immigration include the deep inequality of the global economy and the direct results of many U.S. foreign policies, including the drug war that detonates violence (Mexico as a heart-breaking case in point), economic sanctions, the promotion of unregulated predatory capitalism and "free trade." Given their role in the problem, U.S. politicians have the power and the tools to prevent forcing people to flee their homes, but it's much more politically advantageous to blame the immigrants when they do. The U.S. press and politicians point to a rise in border crossings — 8,000 apprehensions a day, according to the latest figures — as a "surge" an "invasion," amid rampant metaphors of immigrants as a "virus" or "plague." Not only do they misconstrue the reality of migration flows, they also obscure the reality of migrants' role in society.

Crossings now are not at a record-high; instead, they mark a return to numbers before the end of Title 42 and measures in May that caused a brief hiatus in migratory flows. Also, U.S. government data shows that more than a quarter of apprehensions are "border recidivism," the same people making multiple attempts. This is the logical result of increased apprehension efforts, not offering sufficient legal pathways to meet real labor demand, and forcing people to wait in Mexico for delayed asylum processes.

Thanks to press and Republican hype, a growing percentage of the population is "dissatisfied with the level of immigration into the country today," believing it is too high, according to

ANT PS

a recent Gallup poll. Immigrant-aimed mass killings demonstrate that some are violently "dissatisfied." And yet the perception behind the fear and hatred is fabricated. The United States is not being overrun with migrants that endanger the "American way of life." A study of census data finds that the number of immigrants in 2022 is two million below the Census Bureau's prediction for that year and that over the last decade the United States has seen the slowest growth of immigrant share of the population since the 1960s.

But let's say there were a significant increase in migratory flows to the country. The second point that is tragically wrong about the Adams narrative on immigration is that it poses a threat to Americans. Migrants contribute to every aspect of U.S. society — as taxpayers, neighbors, workers, artists, community members and family.

Studies demonstrate that migrants' contribution to the U.S. economy has a net positive impact. Republican policies to crack down on undocumented workers are straining state economies, with reports of severe labor shortages coming out of Florida after Gov. Ron DeSantis pushed through measures to force undocumented workers out of the state's labor market. The Chamber of Commerce reports a labor shortage in every state in the country, with reduced immigration a major factor. At what economists agree is U.S. "full employment", immigrants are not stealing jobs — in fact they are needed for essential jobs that cannot be filled otherwise.

THE EXTERNALIZATION OF THE BORDER

And yet the push to exclude continues, conveniently (for business) consolidating an underground labor market devoid of labor rights, bargaining power or equality. The Biden strategy now goes beyond "securing the border" to measures to "externalize the border" — enlisting countries to the south in stopping migrant flows before they reach the U.S. border. Mexico is the number one partner in doing this.

Mexico has gone from an early policy of issuing humanitarian visas that enabled safe travel to an erratic mix of repression and bureaucratic chaos. The capitulation began in 2019 when Trump threatened tariffs on Mexican goods if the nation didn't adopt the U.S.' anti-migrant policies, and, if anything, it has intensified under Biden. Although Title 42 and Remain in Mexico policies were lifted, in last month's agreement with the Biden administration, the government of Mexican President Andreas Manuel Lopez Obrador agreed to crack down once again, upping deportations and repatriation flights (especially from its northern border), prohibiting migrants from boarding trains, and deploying more troops to both its northern and southern borders along with intensified persecution in the interior of the country.

Gabriela Hernandez, director of the Mexico City shelter Casa Tochan, notes, "Now the migration enters on foot and leaves on foot, without any document or protection. And it's not the migrant's fault. It's the government's fault for not wanting to issue documents that would regulate the process. The government is handing the migrants over to organized crime and traffickers on a silver platter."

Mexico's border with the United States is testimony to the failure of joint immigration policies, living proof of Mexico's lack of national sovereignty, and a cartels' paradise — for extorsion, human trafficking, forced recruiting and sexual abuse. The more crackdowns, the worse it gets.

With a wait of an average of four years for asylum hearings to be resolved and a backlog of 2.6 million cases pending, Biden's government has opened migrant processing centers in Central and South American countries and ordered those countries to block migratory flows. Although Mexico has refused to host a U.S. migrant processing center, the use of the faulty "CBP One" app, developed by the Biden administration to request a hearing and track progress, means that thousands are stuck in Mexico.

"Externalization of borders" is a fancy way of saying that across the globe, wealthy nations are seeking to shirk their international obligations to honor asylum and refugee rights by shunting them off to less-powerful countries. Not only does it violate and often outright deny those rights, it also constitutes a form of hegemonic power over sovereign nations. There is no legal international obligation for Mexico to carry out U.S. border policies. So why does it?

MEXICO IN THE MIDDLE

Trump's 2019 tariff threat sent shock waves throughout the government and business sector. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), "integration" has meant increased dependency on the U.S. economy. Mexico also holds elections in 2024. Although immigration is not an issue that moves people and the president's party seems likely to win again, the Mexican president doesn't want to provoke the U.S. during the volatile electoral period.

Lopez Obrador has correctly calculated that pressure from the United States on migration will increase in the run-up to U.S. elections. That's not a hard call to make with Republicans already calling to bomb Mexican fentanyl labs and send U.S. troops in to attack drug cartels and human traffickers. While rejecting these absurd ideas, AMLO recently decided to take the immigration bull by the horns and build his own regional leadership around the issue.

Lopez Obrador hosted an Oct. 22 meeting of regional heads of state to address immigration. It was attended by the presidents of Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, Cuba, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Haiti and by representatives of El Salvador, Belizem and Costa Rica. But signs point to Mexico's continued support for the U.S. border deterrence and externalization strategy, while demanding foreign aid and investment.

Although some plans for humanitarian support were discussed, there was no call for a major shift in the U.S.-imposed strategy of detention, deportation and deterrence. The group followed Mexico's lead by demanding investment in the region, with no criticism of the Biden policy of private investment that exacerbates push factors including extractivist megaprojects that displace local communities, environmentally-destructive development like factory farms that contribute to climate change, and corporate-land and resource grabs.

Lopez Obrador insists that Mexico is a transit country. The reality is that it is also a destination, with an explosion of applications for asylum that also encounter an impossible backlog. Programs to rapidly integrate asylum seekers and allow them to work would benefit the economy and reduce human suffering. Mexico also continues to be a sending country. No one talks about it because it's an embarrassment to a government that claims to have resolved internal problems, but the large majority of U.S. border apprehensions continue to be Mexicans.

So what could be done? The militarized, supply-side approach to immigration is as doomed in immigration control as it is in drug control. "Deterrence" implies options that people don't have. In thousands of asylum interviews, migrants state they would stay home if they could.

While immigration is by definition a regional phenomenon, that doesn't mean that regional approaches defined by who holds the most power (the United States) are the answer. Each country has to take responsibility for what happens within its own borders. In the United States, it's not just the U.S. immigration system that is broken. It's a social system that fails to provide minimal wellbeing to everyone. This focus means resisting the temptation to divide communities into *us vs. them*

When considering housing needs, place a policy priority on affordable housing for all. When asylum seekers need work permits, include an effort to provide work permits for all immigrants, including those already in the labor force performing vital functions, as became strikingly evident in the pandemic.

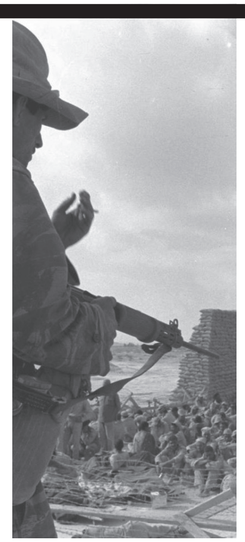
As Oscar Chacon, director of the nationwide immigrant organization Alianza Americas, points out, "We could easily imagine a different hemisphere-wide approach, one that starts with the positive contributions migrants make but also recognizes that these migratory flows, far from being undesirable, are highly necessary." Chacon in the United States and Hernandez in Mexico both stress the need for governments to get together with migrant organizations, labor leaders and groups that provide humanitarian services to talk about what the real needs are and how to meet them together.

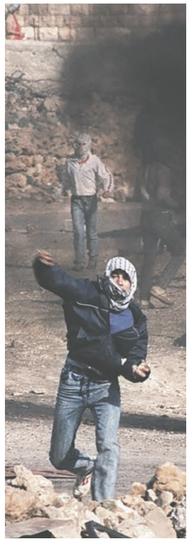
The federal government and U.S. mayors cannot spearhead a serious effort to find a regional solution to the immigration problem if they can't or won't fix their own problems. It's simply not true that there is no room in the United States — or in Mexico — for people who need a safe place to work and raise their families. It's false in demographic terms, it's false in economic terms, it's illegal and it's morally reprehensible.

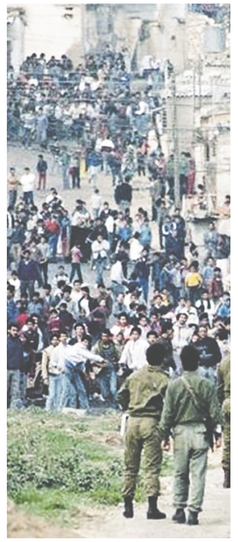
Laura Carlsen, is the director of MIRA: Feminisms and Democracies, A Mexico-City based think tank. For more, see americas.org.

PALESTINE/ISRAEL 101

A GUIDE TO HELP YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND THIS CENTURY-OLD CONFLICT







By John Tarleton

The Israel-Gaza War has dominated the news since Hamas went on a murderous rampage in southern Israel on Oct. 7. The Israeli government has responded by killing thousands of innocent people in Gaza who had nothing to do with the original crime. As *The Indypendent* goes to press, things are likely to get much worse.

So how did we get here?

On a good day corporate media isn't much for context. And when our political leaders catch a bad case of war fever, the media tends to reflect that delirium as well.

What appears below is a brief sketch of a century- old conflict as told through short vignettes about key moments that continue to shape how this conflict is unfolding today. As William Faulkner once wrote, "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

The Palestine/Israel conflict is a tragedy for both Israelis and Palestinians who live with the legacy of a Faustian bargain that one historically oppressed and abused group made to take the land of another group of people who had never harmed them before.

This newly abused group has, at times, lashed out violently at their tormentors whose own historical traumas are then triggered anew, which in turn gives them a self-righteous fury to continue acting badly.

Where does this all end?

There are maximalists in both camps who envision all the land "from the river to the sea" someday belonging to their group and are willing to use great amounts of violence to get their way. But maybe, just maybe over time co-existence will become possible whether through a one-state solution, a two-state solution or something we can't envision at this time. If so, peaceful co-existence might spring not so much from idealism but from the hard-earned knowledge that every other approach is much worse.

OTTOMAN RULE

1516-1917

For four centuries, Palestine exists in relative peace as a province of the Ottoman Empire which also encompasses what is now Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and parts of Saudi Arabia. Great Britain defeats the Ottomans in World War I and seizes Palestine in 1917 among other Middle Eastern possessions.

BIRTH OF ZIONISM

1897

The First Zionist Congress convenes in Basel, Switzerland under the leadership of Theodore Herzl. Faced with rampant anti-semitism in 19th Century Europe, Herzl believed anti-semitism could not be defeated, only avoided. He argues instead for creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine that could be a safe haven for all Jews. One year before his death in 1904, Herzl expresses interest in a British Foreign Office proposal to establish a Jewish homeland in what is now Uganda. After his death, Herzl's allies in the Zionist movement quickly bury that idea.

BALFOUR DECLARATION

NOVEMBER 2, 1917

British Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour releases a letter to Lord Rothschild, a leader in the British Jewish community, pledging Britain's support for establishing "a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine though less than 10% of the population of Palestine at the time was Jewish. The Balfour Declaration becomes a catalyst for the Zionist movement. No native Palestinian is consulted while it was being drafted.

THE BRITISH MANDATE

1920

The League of Nations, the United Nations' predecessor organization, grants Great Britain a mandate over Palestine and the French a mandate over Lebanon, ratifying terms of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, a secret deal the two imperialist powers reached in 1916 to carve up the Middle East after World War 1.

A DISPUTE OVER HOLY SITES

1929

Roughly 250 people are killed in riots over access to holy sites in Jerusalem – the Wailing Wall for Jews and the Al Aqsa Mosque for Muslims – that are sacred in their faith traditions.

ARAB REVOLT

1936–1939

A Palestinian general strike spread across Palestine in the summer of 1936. Armed conflict follows between the Palestinians on one side and the British and the Jews on the other. British repression of the uprising greatly weakened Palestinian leadership and military capability in the years leading up to the founding of Israel.

A PROPHETIC WARNING

1944

The German-Jewish political philosopher Hannah Arendt is best known as the author of The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951). Once a committed Zionist, Arendt changed her mind, warning in 1944 that a Jewish state in Palestine surrounded by hostile neighbors would inevitably degenerate into a modern-day Sparta. "The growth of a Jewish culture would cease to be the concern of the whole people," she writes. "Social experiments would have to be discarded as impractical luxuries; political thought would center around military strategy."

KING DAVID HOTEL BOMBING

1946

Impatient with continued British rule over Palestine, Irgun, a right-wing Zionist militia led by Menachem Begin, bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The hotel was home to the British administration that oversaw Mandatory Palestine.

UNITED NATIONS PARTITION

NOVEMBER 1947

With British rule over Mandatory Palestine soon to expire, the United Nations agrees to a partition plan that gives 56% of Palestine to the future state of Israel and 44% to Palestinians, even though they are two-thirds of the population.

THE FOUNDING OF ISRAEL/ THE NAKBA

MAY 14, 1948

The British mandate expires and the state of Israel is born. Eleven minutes later, the United States becomes the first nation to recognize Israel. Several Arab countries attack Israel but are defeated. From 1947–49, Zionist militias carry out an ethnic cleansing campaign that kills an estimated 10,000 Palestinians, depopulates more than 500 towns and villages and sends 750,000 Palestinians fleeing to neighboring countries. When the dust clears, Israel controls 78% of Palestine, while the other 22% is controlled by Jordan (West Bank, East Jerusalem) and Egypt (Gaza Strip). In defiance of international law, the refugees who were driven away would never be allowed to return. For Palestinians, the birth of Israel would become known as the Al Nakba, or "The Catastrophe."

BIRTH OF THE PLO

1964

The Palestinian Liberation Organization was founded as an umbrella organization for secular nationalist groups that sought to destroy the Israeli state through armed struggle. The largest group, Al-Fatah, was led by Yasser Arafat, who became chairman of the PLO in 1969. Arafat held that post until his death in 2004. The PLO played a key role in bringing the Palestinian struggle into the global spotlight. However, the group also gained an unsavory reputation in the West for carrying out deadly attacks against civilian targets.

SIX-DAY WAR

JUNE 1967

Israel launches a pre-emptive strike against neighboring Arab nations, seizing the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria. This marks the beginning of the longest formal military occupation in world history which continues to this day in the West Bank. The defeat in the Six-Day War proves to be the high-water mark for the secular pan-Arab nationalist movement championed by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. In future decades, Islamist movements will play an increasingly prominent role in galvanizing opposition to Israel and the U.S. presence in the Middle East.

U.N. RESOLUTION 242

NOVEMBER 1967

In the aftermath of the Six-Day War, the U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 242, which calls on Israel to return lands seized in the Six Day War as the basis for a final settlement of its borders with its Arab neighbors and a future Palestinian state composed of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank with East Jerusalem as the capital. This continues to be the internationally recognized basis for an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal.

BLACK SEPTEMBER

1970

In the wake of the Six-Day War, the PLO steps up its attacks on Israel from neighboring Jordan. Worried that the PLO is seeking to topple him, Jordan's King Hussein turns his regime's firepower against the PLO in a civil war that runs from September 1970 to July 1971. The PLO is defeated and then allowed to withdraw to Lebanon where it sets up a new base.

1973 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR

OCTOBER 1973

Egypt and Syria launch a surprise attack on the Jewish high holiday of Yom Kippur. Egypt and Syria initially regain control of their lost territory in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights before Israel rallies with an infusion of U.S. military aid and regains control of the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. The war is seen as a debacle in Israel and Prime Minister Golda Meir is forced to resign afterward, while Arab celebrate the war as a triumph following their humiliating defeats in 1948 and 1967.

OPEC OIL EMBARGO

OCTOBER 1973

Led by Saudi Arabia, members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) flex their muscles for the first time by launching an oil embargo against the United States and several other Western nations for supporting Israel in the Yom Kippur War. The cost of a gallon of gas soars for American motorists who find themselves stuck in gas lines when they go to fill up their tank. The cash windfall from the spike in prices makes oil-rich Middle Eastern nations fabulously wealthy overnight.

ISRAEL MOVES TO THE RIGHT

1977

After nearly three decades in power, Israel's Labor Party is defeated by Menachem Begin and his conservative Likud Party. Religious-minded settlers, who believe all of the land from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea was promised by God to the Jewish people, make up a key part of Prime Minister Begin's right-wing coalition. Under Begin, Israel ramps up settlement construction in the Occupied Territories in the hopes of forestalling demands for it to trade land for peace with the Palestinians.

SADAT GOES TO ISRAEL

1977

Four years after he launched the Yom Kippur War, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat announces his desire to reach a peace agreement with Israel and becomes the first Arab leader to visit the Jewish state.

CAMP DAVID PEACE ACCORDS

SEPTEMBER 1978

After 12 days of secret negotiations, Sadat, Begin and U.S. President Jimmy Carter reached a comprehensive peace agreement. Israel agrees to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in return for security guarantees that its powerful Arab neighbor will not attack it again in the future. The United States sweetens the deal for Egypt by agreeing to make it the world's second-largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid after Israel. The three countries vow to pursue a vaguely-defined peace process to resolve the Palestinian issue. The Camp David Accords are denounced throughout the Arab world as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause. Egypt is expelled from the Arab League and is not allowed to rejoin until 1989. The peace deal between Israel and Egypt remains in effect to this day.

ISRAEL INVADES LEBANON

JUNE 1982

With peace on Israel's southern border guaranteed with Egypt, Begin pivots and launches an invasion of Lebanon where Israel and the PLO have fought skirmishes on Israel's northern border for years. Israel invades Lebanon and drives all the way to Beirut, marking the first time it enters an Arab capital. Israel's bombardment of Beirut draws international condemnation. While Israel and its local allies control West Beirut, Arafat and the PLO remain holed up in East Beirut. The standoff ends when Arafat and the PLO agree to withdraw to Tunisia in North Africa.

THE ORIGINS OF HEZBOLLAH

1985–2000

Following its 1982 invasion, Israel pulls back and maintains control of a swath of southern Lebanon with the help of local Christian militia allies. This occupation radicalizes the Shi'ite Muslims of southern Lebanon and helps spur the formation of Hezbollah ("The Party of God") – a political party, militia and social-services agency all wrapped in one – which led the Lebanese resistance to Israel. In 2000, Israel was forced to withdraw from Lebanon, boosting Hezbollah's prestige.

1ST INTIFADA BEGINS

DECEMBER 1987

A traffic accident on the West Bank with an Israeli military vehicle that leaves four Palestinians dead sparks protests that turns into a massive, largely non-violent uprising against the Occupation. This bottom-up movement is coordinated by community councils and mobilizes people from across Palestinian civil society. Israeli repression and infiltration gradually grinds the movement down over several years.

HAMAS IS BORN

1988

Hamas is founded by Islamists who vow to destroy Israel. Hamas's growth is tacitly supported by Israel who see the organization as a counterweight to the secular leftism of the PLO which is the much larger of the two groups at the time.

OSLO PEACE ACCORDS

1993

Shaken by the Intifada, Israel's top leaders realize they can't run a full-scale military occupation indefinitely. They need a credible partner to sub-contract their dirty work to. Marginalized by the intifada, the PLO's exiled leadership in Tunisia decides to come in from the cold and give Israel what it needs in return for a junior role in running the Occupied Territories and a promise to begin "final negotiations" on creating a Palestinian state. The arrangement is codified in the Oslo Accords and then solemnized when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat shake hands on the White House lawn while President Bill Clinton presides over the ceremony.

A FATEFUL ASSASSINATION

NOVEMBER 4, 1995

Yitzak Rabin's commitment to the Oslo Accords draws the ire of the settler West Bank settler movement. On Nov. 4, 1995, Rabin, a former general who led the Israeli military to victory in the Six-Day War, speaks to a peace rally that brings out 100,000 people. As Rabin exits the event, he is shot and killed by an Israeli right-wing extremist. In the run-up to the election to replace Rabin, Hamas unleashes a wave of suicide bombers that succeed in scaring Israeli voters into the arms of Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu, who has no interest in creating a Palestinian state.

THE SECOND INTIFADA

2000–2005

For Palestinians, the early hopes for the Oslo Peace Accords gave way to bitter disappointment over the continued building of settlements in the Occupied Territories and the failure to gain their own state. In September 2000, militant groups within the PLO launch a wave of suicide bombings against Israeli civilians on public buses, at pizza parlors and even a Passover seder. The Second Intifada claimed more than 800 Israeli lives and 3,000 Palestinians. It also all but extinguished the Israeli peace movement which was already demoralized by Yitzak Rabin's assassination.

THE WALL GOES UP

2003

In response to the spate of suicide bombings, the Israelis built a massive separation barrier (or "apartheid wall" as it was deemed by its critics) that doesn't abide by the 1967 boundaries, but cuts deep into the West Bank and gives more land to the settlers.

Continued on next page

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VFP members protest at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv.

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PALESTINE/ISRAEL 101

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WITHDRAWAL FROM GAZA
AUGUST 2005
Israeli forces withdraw from Gaza 38 years after capturing it from Egypt, abandoning settlements and leaving it under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

HAMAS WINS AN ELECTION
JANUARY 2006
With the ineffectual Palestinian Authority mired in corruption, Hamas wins the majority of seats in a Palestinian legislative election

ISRAEL-HEZBOLLAH WAR
JULY 2006
This 34-day conflict began with cross-border raid by Hezbollah that killed several Israelis and ended with as many as 1,300 Lebanese killed and billions of dollars in damage to Lebanon's civic infrastructure. 165 Israelis were killed. Hezbollah would only grow stronger as a military force.

THE FIRST ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR
DECEMBER 2008
Israel launches a 22-day military offensive in Gaza after rockets were fired at the southern Israeli town of Sderot. About 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis are killed before a ceasefire is agreed upon. Similar conflicts between Israel and Hamas would occur in 2012, 2014 and 2014 with Gazans enduring much higher casualties each time.

MARCH 2017
In the centennial year of the Balfour Declaration, the Trump administration moves the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in a signal of strong support for the Israeli government's claim that "the eternal city" should be its capital.

NETANYAHU & HAMAS
2019
In a 2019 Israeli Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Netanyahu urges sending more support to Hamas in Gaza as a way to weaken the Palestinian Authority, which governs the West Bank.

THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS
2020
With interest in the peace process defunct in both Tel Aviv and Washington, the Trump administration, led by his son-in-law Jared Kushner, came up with a novel solution: Ignore the Palestinians and bribe Arab nations to normalize relations with Israel. So far, Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates have joined the Abraham Accords. Saudi Arabia was moving toward a normalization deal with Israel until the Israel-Gaza War erupted.

NETANYAHU RETURNS TO POWER
JANUARY 2023
Upon returning to power, Benjamin Netanyahu and his extremist religious allies focused on expanding the settler footprint in the West Bank as rapidly as possible. For them, burying any hopes for a two-state solution remains a work in progress. To deal with the turmoil caused by the government's policies, most of the Israeli Defense Forces troops stationed in Southern Israel are rotated to the West Bank.

ANOTHER WAR BEGINS
OCTOBER 7, 2023
Hamas breaks through the high-tech wall that surrounds Gaza and goes on a murderous rampage in about 20 nearby Israeli towns and villages, leaving over 1,400 Israelis dead. Israeli vows revenge, killing more than 7,000 Gazans (including more than 2,000 children) in less than three weeks while cutting off all food, water, fuel and medicines.

GARY MARTIN

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CALL ISRAEL AN APARTHEID STATE?

By Ellen Davidson

What does it mean to call Israel an apartheid state?

The word, meaning literally "apartness," originally referred to policies introduced in South Africa in 1948. Although presented as a path of equal but separate development of racial groups in that country, like "separate but equal" in this country, it was anything but.

Under apartheid people were classified as "native," "colored," "Asian," or "white," and these designations determined access to land, schools, resources, etc. Apartheid laws served to reserve the vast majority of the land for white South Africans, relocating the non-white population to so-called bantustans far from the areas they had lived in for many years. In the white-controlled areas, nonwhites were denied political rights, including the right to vote, since they were considered citizens of the ostensibly independent "homelands" set up by the apartheid government, which consisted of small unviable enclaves with no resources or opportunities for work or economic development.

The system also included identity cards that nonwhite people had to carry in order to live, work, or even travel in particular parts of the country. These notorious "pass laws" were the main instrument of control and existed until 1986.

This web of restrictive laws was enforced by a brutal police state, and thousands of South Africans, mainly Black and "colored," were imprisoned, tortured or killed.

After decades of internal resistance both armed and nonviolent, and an international campaign to isolate South Africa economically and politically, the laws were repeated in the early 1990s and a new constitution adopted in 1993.

Apartheid now refers to any system of racial segregation and is deemed a crime against humanity by the U.N. Apartheid Convention.

So why have Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the Israeli human rights group Bet'selem and many others declared Israel to be an apartheid state?

One of the central tenets of the South African system was dispossession from the land and control of resources by white settlers. Israel has replicated this process. In Israel/Palestine, the land that is nominally under Palestinian control constitutes 22% of historic Palestine. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were made permanent exiles in 1947–48, as Zionist militias terrorized and massacred whole villages. Many more were forced out by the invasion in 1967, when the Israeli army took over the West Bank and Gaza in an occupation that continues to this day.

Even the land that is supposed to make up an eventual Palestinian state according to proponents of a two-state solution is not contiguous; it is divided between the Occupied West Bank and Gaza, which, although not technically occupied, is blockaded on both its land and sea borders by Israel. The West Bank itself is split up into enclaves increasingly surrounded by and encroached on by Israeli settlements. It is further atomized by Israel's "separation barrier" (which Palestinians call the apartheid wall), which at times goes through the center of villages (in one case through the middle of an elementary school playground) and cuts off farmers from their agricultural lands. The territory is riddled with checkpoints and other military installations, and criss-crossed with roads that are reserved for Israeli settlers

There are numerous laws both inside Israel's formal borders and in the Occupied Territories that make clear the second-class status of Israel's non-Jewish citizens and residents of the West Bank and Gaza.

Just to mention a few:

- *In 2021 the Israeli parliament adopted the Jewish Nation-State Law, which identifies Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish people, thus formalizing the inferior status of the Palestinian people. The Supreme Court of Israel upheld the law. The current government holds as one of its guiding principles: "The Jewish people have an exclusive and inalienable right over all areas of the Land of Israel."*

- *Jews from anywhere in the world are eligible to become citizens of Israel while holding on to their previous citizenship. Non-Jews can apply for citizenship, but they must renounce their previous citizenship, must have lived for three years as a permanent resident, must and demonstrate knowledge of the Hebrew language (Israel is nominally a bilingual state, Arabic and Hebrew). Palestinian refugees who were born in what has since become Israel are not allowed to return and claim citizenship.*

- *Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are increasingly cut off from life in their city by the wall snaking through it. As it becomes impossible for them to get to commercial and other districts, they turn to other areas for their needs, they risk losing their Jerusalem residency permits and access to the city and government services.*

- *Palestinians in the Occupied Territories are subject to arbitrary "administrative detention" for up to six months, at which point their detention can be renewed, leading to many Palestinians being held in prison for years on end with no charge and no legal recourse.*

- *Resources in the Occupied West Bank are disproportionately allocated to the Israeli settlements. For example, settlements use up to 10 times as much water per capita as Palestinian communities, and the Palestinians are charged higher prices.*

- *Palestinians in the West Bank are subject to the control of the Israeli military, whereas residents of illegal Israeli settlements in the region are not. In fact, rules of engagement for Israeli military in the West Bank forbid them from firing on or arresting Israeli settlers, even when they are armed and violent.*

- *Palestinians in Gaza have no freedom of movement at all. The entire region is blockaded by Israel, which controls travel in and out.*

- *Palestinian homes both inside Israel and in the West Bank are under constant threat of demolition because Israeli authorities deny building permits to Palestinians (Al-Araqib, a Bedouin village in the Negev, has been demolished more than 200 times since 2010). Israeli settlements on the West Bank, which are illegal under international law, are protected by the Israeli military.*

- *Because of the presence of Jewish settlers, many streets in the city of Hebron are off-limits to the Palestinian residents. They are called "sterilized" by the IDF. There are three levels of sterilization: Palestinians may not open businesses on the street, Palestinians may not drive vehicles on the street, and Palestinians may not walk on the street, even if their home is on that street. The city is dotted with ladders between rooftops used to access homes whose residents cannot walk in or out their own front doors.*

These are just some examples of the daily repression and humiliation faced by Palestinians inside Israel and under occupation. No wonder South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu said in 2014, "I know first-hand that Israel has created an apartheid reality within its borders and through its occupation. The parallels to my own beloved South Africa are painfully stark indeed."

In a call to replicate the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign that ultimately helped bring an end to South Africa's racist regime, he said, "Those who continue to do business with Israel, who contribute to a sense of 'normalcy' in Israeli society, are doing the people of Israel and Palestine a disservice. They are contributing to the perpetuation of a profoundly unjust status quo."

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY

WILL I BE NEXT?: *A child surveys bombed-out buildings in Gaza.*

'HEY EVERYONE, I'M STILL ALIVE'

A YOUNG WOMAN REPORTS FROM AMID THE RUBBLE

By Amba Guerguerian

Before Oct. 7, @wizard_bisan1 was the Instagram profile of a young Gazan journalist who posted videos about the daily oppression Gazans face, about Palestinian culture, about her love for travel and zeal for life. On Oct. 8, she posted an austere series of videos consisting of slides with white words on black background:

"There are things that happen in the war on Gaza that you cannot know from the news; you need to live them to understand. For example, do they say in the news that we wake up with the dust of bombing on our faces and bodies, in our eyes and on our bed, and smelling of gunpowder and dirt? … A few seconds determine our fates, so we sleep [with our clothes and shoes on] so we don't waste any time when the bombing [starts]."

On Oct. 13, things got more dire. Bisan writes on top of screenshots of crowded streets and evacuation notices: "I can't publish any videos! Please help us … There is no internet connection. … Me and my family are in the street and we don't find any place to go. … the humanitarian aid zone is exactly on the border with Egypt. It's officially the second NAKBA!"

Accounts like @wizard_bisan1 have become a lifeline for those who care to follow what's happening in on the ground Gaza. With the United States demanding that *Al Jazeera* reduce it's coverage and with META deleting pro-Palestinian Instagram accounts, Bisan's reporting is more indispensable than ever — although internet connection in the bombed-out strip is becoming increasingly sparse.

She often starts her videos with the same opening: "Hi, everyone, This is Bisan from Gaza. I'm still alive." She is able to charge her phone by using electricity from generators, but is fearful a day will soon come that run out of gas. Here are some excerpts from her recent videos:

OCT 13

Bisan posts from a crowded square:

> *"More updates about the evacuation… Do you remember when I said that they pushed people to evacuate from the north end [of Gaza] to the southern areas via a safe route as they said? Okay, that was a trick. That was a trick. They targeted ambulances, cars and buses on the road. … They are playing with and on us. They told us this is a safe route. Innocent people took anything from their homes and went to the southern areas, and they killed them. They literally killed them. Literally, more than 30 ambulance cars until now reach al-Shifa [hospital] and it's not ended yet. Many people are killed. Most of them are children. The scenes are really hard. I can't even imagine that I'm living this. I can't imagine that this is real. I'm losing my mind. I'm losing my life. [Crying] please, do something!*

OCT 15

Bisan reports from in front of al-Shifa hospital, which is crowded with people. She interviews three young boys — Mohammed, who looks around 10, Neher, who is maybe eight, and little Karam who must be four or five — that are sweeping the street:

> *Bisan: For who are you cleaning?*
> *Boys: For al-Shifa*
> *Bisan: Are you volunteering? Where are you staying?*
> *Boys: Al-Shifa*
> *Bisan: So you're staying there [points to an area nearby], and you are cleaning in front of the tent? Who gave you those brooms?"*
> *Boys: We collected them from the neighbors.*
> *Bisan: Let me see your work! What are your names?*
> *Boys: Neher, Karam and Mohammad.*
> *Bisan: So Mohammad, Karam and Neher are cleaning al-Shifa Hospital, the place that they took as a shelter. By themselves they are volunteering. So they're just creating home. These are our heroes; our kids. Bravo, bravo, kids."*

OCT 16

Bisan walks around a small shaded square with makeshift shelters in it, the sound of voices in the background.

> *I and my family are losing our minds. We're having illusions, w'allah, we are having delusions. Tonight I stood up at 2:30 a.m. screaming and trying to cover my nose and my eyes with with a piece of cloth and some water because I — I — I— I think I saw — I saw white phosphorus bombs and I thought they were real, and then my family tried to calm me down, and I realized that I was — like everything was like a delusion. It was not real. To — today in the morning, my sister, she's saying "I'm hearing screaming all the day and night inside my head" and my mother is hearing raining. So what is happening? I don't know, but we're losing our minds. We are losing our sense. Allah, give us more patience.*

OCT 17

Bisan reports from her tent city. We see an outdoor kitchen, a pick-up truck-turned closet, makeshift tents, people selling bread and many people milling around.

> *"So, in this way I can tell you that we are people who deserve to live. [We] are creating new ways and trying to make it suitable for living, everyday, in every phase that we are going through. Despite that, we don't know if we're living until tomorrow or not … we are just trying to make the shelter or the hospital, as safe and as suitable as we used to [be] in our streets and neighborhoods and homes. So here are people selling bread, selling any other goods like snacks, like juices, making drinks, and some people are shaving, are barbers now, but open-air barbers. So, no one could deprive this people, their right to live and the right to live safely in their country, in their homeland. Whatever they do, whoever they were, and whoever's support they got — it's just our right to live, as Palestinians in Palestine, eating bread.*

OCT 23

Bisan reports from under a tarp. There are sounds of air raids overheard.

> *Hey everyone, I'm still alive. And I want to tell you about my biggest fear. So my biggest fear is not to die. Actually, I'd prefer to die than living all of these nightmares, continuous nightmares. My biggest fear is to live, after all this war, to live and face the reality that our cities, our homes, our homeland, and everything is destroyed — our beloved ones, our friends and relatives are killed. And the fact that we don't have work, and we have to deal with a lot of humanitarian crises and people are facing winter — winter is coming. People are without homes, without food, without fuel, without electricity. The infrastructure is destroyed. There are no schools, universities or anything — we have to rebuild everything and to rebuild our motivation to live and our mental health. And that will take years and years. I mean, it's really terrifying. How could we live after this? There are people who are killed, and we still didn't know. How could we face this? I really still didn't know. It's just the 16th day of the war. And we've lost around 5,000 souls and tens of thousands of buildings.*

OCT 25 (morning)

Bisan reports from a bombed-out building with a bullet-proof PRESS vest on. She walks around pulling objects from rubble.

> *Oh hey everyone. Another home was bombed in the most crowded area in the Gaza Strip and*

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PALESTINE, IN THE STREETS

PHOTOS BY SUE BRISK

Israel has responded to Hamas' Oct. 7 massacre of 1,400 of its citizens with an unrelenting aerial bombardment that has killed more than 7,000 Palestinians in Gaza as The Indypendent goes to press. Israel is also poised to launch a ground invasion into Gaza while speculation grows that it will seek to expel Gaza's 2.3 million residents into neighboring Egypt. The unrelenting violence has spurred anti-war protests with large turnouts around the world and across New York City. Here in the city, many of the protests have been led by Palestinians whose concerns historically have been ignored whenever Israel goes to war.

– INDYPENDENT STAFF

TOGETHER: *A father and son attend an Oct. 21 pro-Palestine protest in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.*

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: *Bay Ridge residents come out to show their support for the Oct. 21 protest march as it wound through their neighborhood.*

CITY HALL PROTEST: *(clockwise) An artist shows a painting he made of a Gazan family enduring a bombing. A protester makes their views known. And three women join the protest.*

SUE BRISK

FORBIDDEN SPEECH: *Supporters of Palestinian rights face a new wave of politically-motivated discrimination.*

A NEW 'MCCARTHYITE BACKLASH' AGAINST PRO-PALESTINE SPEECH

FROM UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS TO DEATH THREATS, SUPPORTERS OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS FACE A WAVE OF REPRISALS

By Alex Kane

In Rochester, New York, a religious center received enough threats around an in-person event about Palestine that the program had to be moved online. In Arlington, Virginia, bomb threats forced the country's largest American-Muslim civil-rights group to move a banquet partially focused on Gaza to an undisclosed location. In Houston, a hotel pulled out of hosting a conference organized by a prominent Palestinian rights group due to "escalating security concerns." In Brooklyn, a right-wing City Councilperson brought a gun to a student protest for Gaza.

As Israel's bombardment of Gaza continues, Americans are expressing their opposition on college campuses, on social media and in the streets. But the dissent has come with a cost. Across the United States, supporters of Palestinian rights are facing a severe backlash to their speech and activism, ranging from university condemnations of student protest to death threats and intimidation from pro-Israel groups.

"We've had an exponential surge in requests for legal help. It has been like nothing we've seen before," said Radhika Sainath, a senior staff attorney at Palestine Legal, which defends the free speech rights of Palestine advocates. Since Oct. 8, the group has responded to nearly 200 reports of "suppression of Palestinian rights advocacy" — almost as many incidents as they addressed in all of last year. According to Sainath, attorneys have spoken to everyone from "people being fired from their jobs for tweets or social media messages that support Palestinian human rights," to student critics of Israel who are being "doxxed and put on a website called 'College Terror List,'" which seeks to make them unemployable. "There is an increase in people who are really concerned with the genocidal intentions of Israel right now — and they're being met with immense McCarthyite backlash and suppression," Sainath said.

Colleges and universities are the epicenter of this renewed Palestine-solidarity activism and have quickly become prime sites of the reprisals against it. For years, pro-Israel advocacy groups have worked to police public discourse on campuses, where pro-Palestinian sentiment is more visible than in perhaps any other forum of American life. Supporters of Israel have urged institutions to cancel pro-Palestine events, created blacklists of students deemed "antisemitic" due to their Palestine activism, filed civil rights complaints against universities for allowing such activism, and pressed universities to fire professors who criticize Israel. And since Oct. 7 — when Hamas attacked Israel, and Israel began bombing Gaza — a new wave of activism has garnered fresh backlash.

Student groups at Yale, Dartmouth, and Princeton, among others, posted statements of solidarity with Palestine, arguing that the present violence in Palestine/Israel has its roots in Israel's oppression of Palestinians; many specifically cited Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948 and the 16-year blockade of the Gaza Strip as catalysts for recent events. On Oct. 8, in a statement co-signed by 34 other student groups, Harvard's Palestine Solidarity Committee said that they "hold the Israeli regime entirely responsible for all unfolding violence." The next day, Yale's pro-Palestinian student group, Yalies4Palestine, released a statement that read: "We mourn the tragic loss of civilian lives, and for this we hold the Zionist regime accountable."

The backlash to these efforts has been swift and resounding. Two days after the Harvard students released their statement, for instance, more than 350 Harvard faculty signed a letter saying that the activists' stance amounted to "nothing less than condoning the mass murder" of Israelis. Several U.S. lawmakers issued similar denunciations. And the opposition did not stop there. On Oct. 12, the right-wing group Accuracy in Media dispatched a truck to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to publicize images of students who were thought to be part of signatory organizations. The truck was emblazoned with the URL "HarvardHatesJews.com," which redirected to the Accuracy in Media site. According to a former American Civil Liberties Union president who spoke to *The New York Times*, such actions aim to suppress students' speech. They may also be impacting their employment prospects: After the Harvard students' letter was published, CEOs at multiple companies publicly demanded that the university release the names of students whose groups had signed the statement so that they could be sure not to hire them.

Such job-offer revocations are sometimes accompanied by further harassment, as in the case of New York University Law School's student body president Ryna Workman. On Oct. 10, Workman sent a newsletter to the law school's student body expressing solidarity with Palestinians and blaming the "tremendous loss of life" in the region on Israel's apartheid regime. In a statement sent to journalists, Workman said their message was "inspired [by] what many Jewish peace activists and Israelis, including the editorial board of Israel's largest newspaper, have voiced over the past week in response to the violence." However, in response to their newsletter, Workman lost a job offer at the law firm Winston & Strawn. The law school's Student Bar Association also voted to begin the process of ousting Workman as student body president, and NYU law alumni have since called for their expulsion from the university. "I've been getting death threats online," Workman said in the statement, adding that they have been attacked for being Black, queer, and nonbinary. "The harassment campaign against me has targeted all facets of my identity."

On other campuses, the threats to Palestine activists have been even more severe, such as the Oct. 12 rally at Brooklyn College where Inna Vernikov, a Republican New York City Councilwoman, showed up openly carrying a gun. Vernikov filmed herself calling the student ralliers "pro-Hamas" and "nothing short of terrorists without the bombs." (The councilwoman was later arrested for openly

Continued on page 18

OLGA FEDOROVA

UNBULLIED: *Palestinian author Sumaya Awad speaks on Oct. 20 at a pro-ceasefire rally in midtown organized by the NYC chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America.*

DSA IN THE CROSSHAIRS

TOP NEW YORK DEMS TARGET DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS FOR CRITICIZING ISRAEL

By Theodore Hamm

On Sunday, Oct. 8, one day after Hamas launched its deadly assault on Israel, pro-Palestinian activists held a rally at Times Square that also brought out counter-protesters in support of Israel. Behind barricades on opposite sides of W 43 Street, the two groups loudly expressed their positions.

At one point a nondescript young male of color on the Palestinian side — who carried no signs and wore nothing that indicated his political position — waved his cellphone so that people on the other side of 43rd Street would see it. On it there was an image of a swastika.

A pro-Israel protester named Stuart Meissner captured the provocateur's action and soon tweeted two photos, stating that the pro-Palestine activists were "showing their true colors." The *NY Post* then ran Meissner's photo on its cover on Monday, Oct. 9. A video posted at the time by the *Daily Mail* captured the same incident.

It's tempting to say that the "rest is history" — but the fallout has not yet ended. For at least the next two weeks, the *Post* continued highlighting the swastika in order to denounce pro-Palestine protests. So did the mayor the tabloid helped elect, as well as a certain Congressman from the Bronx, among many others.

More specifically, the smear campaign targeted the Democratic Socialists of America. The day prior to the rally, the NYC chapter of the DSA tweeted an invite to the rally that expressed support for Palestine and made no mention of the Hamas-initiated mass violence. The organization did not co-sponsor the Times Square event and none of its members took the mic.

The tone of the rally shocked many people across the political spectrum. Even though Hamas had just killed more than 1,400 Israelis, speakers treated it like a World Cup victory celebration.

The *Post* seized the opportunity to tarnish the DSA, linking the group to the speakers at the protest as well as the guy who flashed the swastika. On Oct. 10, the DSA issued a statement apologizing for the "timing and tone" of the rally invite. This was insufficient for Congressman Ritchie Torres (D-Bronx), who tweeted— somewhat hyperbolically — that the statement's failure to condemn Hamas showed that the DSA was "despicable, detestable, disgraceful and disgraced."

Undeterred, DSA activists including Assemblymembers Zohran Mamdani and Marcela Mitaynes participated in protests organized by Jewish Voice for Peace outside of Senator Chuck Schumer's apartment building in Park Slope on Friday, Oct. 13. In so doing, the leftist insurgents challenged New York's most powerful Democrat on his home turf, literally.

The following Monday morning, Mayor Adams kicked off the week by renewing the slurs against the DSA. "You had the DSA and others carrying swastikas and calling for the extermination of Jewish people" following the Hamas attacks, Adams stated on MSNBC's Morning Joe, offering no evidence regarding the DSA's position. Like Schumer, Governor Kathy Hochul and Torres, Adams failed to denounce the attendees at a pro-Israel rally who espoused genocidal rhetoric against Palestinians.

THE DSA'S THREAT TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S NEOLIBERAL LEADERSHIP IS BOTH GENERATIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL.

WHY ALL THE DSA-BASHING?

Let's return for a moment to the singular swastika sighting that Adams multiplied. As *The Indypendent* goes to press, no one has yet identified the culprit. We thus do not know anything about his background and actual political affiliations or why he sought to inflame hostilities at the Times Square rally. Whether he acted as an agent provocateur certainly cannot be ruled out at this point.

But for Adams, Torres and the *Post*, the absence of evidence was of little concern. The *Post*, of course, is the house organ of the 1%. Yet two mainstream Democrats were happy to join with the right-wing outlet in demonizing the socialists. The question remains why.

For starters, until the DSA's emergence in electoral politics five years ago, uncritical support for Israel was the default position of nearly all New York City elected officials, regardless of party. In 2014, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries — channeling segregationist George Wallace — famously declared "Israel today. Israel tomorrow. Israel forever." Torres, meanwhile, has received considerable campaign contributions from AIPAC, the powerful pro-Israel lobbying group.

The DSA is clearly not in Israel's corner. In response to Adams' smear on MSNBC, over 400 Jewish members of the DSA signed a letter demanding that the mayor apologize. And on Friday, Oct. 20, the DSA sponsored a large midtown march calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, at which several more of the group's elected officials joined Mamdani and Mitaynes. No swastika sightings were reported.

The bullseye on the DSA's back nonetheless seems disproportionate to the group's actual power. Eleven combined seats in the New York legislature and the city council plus close ties with Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-Bronx/Queens), who is a member of the organization, is certainly not nothing. But while they have bully pulpits, none of the DSA electeds control powerful committees at this point.

The DSA's stance on Israel is not its only challenge to the status quo, however. The group's advocacy for tenants challenges the real-estate interests accustomed to buying off pols from both parties; its support for criminal justice reform threatens the law-enforcement gravy train; and its climate-change initiatives disrupt business as usual.

The DSA also does not answer to the New York Democratic Party's neoliberal leadership, which includes Schumer, Jeffries, Hochul and Adams. The threat is both generational and ideological. Perhaps the insurgent idealists occupy so much space in the heads of the mostly Baby Boomer party brass because they expose the emptiness of the mainstream Democrats' agenda.

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WERE YOU ARRESTED DURING A NEW YORK CITY #BLACKLIVESMATTER PROTEST IN THE SUMMER OF 2020?
YOU MAY HAVE A CLAIM TO A

$9,950

SETTLEMENT, BUT YOU HAVE TO SUBMIT THE CLAIM BY

DECEMBER 22 2023

GAZA VOICES

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> *in the world, of course. So the narrative is talking about bombing the terrorists' homes, so let's see what the terrorists look like. [Picks up a ladies' fan] that was given to a mother or a wife. [Picks up round metal object] remains of a rocket; it's very heavy. [Picks up a purse] that's a handbag, a beautiful handbag. She maybe went for a wedding or a party. [Bends down and leafs through a small children's backpack] look at this; look at this! So this beautiful student, little one, was trying to learn some English. [Picks up a dusty, ripped photo] And look I found this … it's a photograph of someone's graduation. A toy, some of their mattress, clothes. So if these are someone's who is a terrorist, let me know how the normal homes look like … [video ends]*

OCT 25 (night)

A video title "No electricity in Shifa'a hospital," filmed in front of the Al-Shifa hospital. One building is illuminated, but most are just columns of dark windows.

> *Yesterday, the Ministry of Health talked about the whole system collapsing, and they talked about the [lack of] water and fuel. Today, at the Shifa Hospital, the central and the largest hospital in the Gaza strip in the north and the south, collapsed, or at least started to collapse after the electricity cut off suddenly, while there are operations, intensive care, newborn incubators. [Pans from one lit building to a few dark ones] So the electricity is here, but not here.*

OCT 27

Bisan reports straight into the camera not long after taking a shower.

> *Do you jnwo that I've been struggling for almsot a week to have a shower? And finally I could. … [I can't accept] to not find a place to have a shower or to sleep or to have some privacy, or even to cry. [Crying] all my wishes now and all that I want is to stop this war. … I know that we've lost a lot of beloved friends and relatives, places and homes and everything, but at least we're alive now, so just let us get back to — or try to get back — or find a way to get back to our lives. We lost enough, I think; we lost enough, I think; this is satisfying for the occupation; it's enough; just leave us alone.*

BACKLASH

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carrying a weapon at a rally, which is prohibited in New York.) One member of Brooklyn College's Students for Justice in Palestine chapter, who asked to remain anonymous due to safety concerns, said that students were alarmed by Vernikov's presence. "We felt threatened. A lot of students felt like their lives were in danger," they said.

While many of these threats have been aimed at student activists, Palestine Legal's Sainath said the climate of repression has also affected professors and university administrators. "Professors are being questioned, their classes are being canceled, and they are being locked out of their emails over supporting Palestinian rights," she said. "Some university administrators have reported to us that they feel that they can't even publicly support their Palestinian students right now." Pro-Israel donors have also put pressure on institutions themselves. Multiple donors to Harvard said they would cut off their funds because the university had been too slow to condemn the Hamas attack and the student groups' statement. Some donors to the University of Pennsylvania have also said they will no longer fund the school because of what they described as its "silence" on the Hamas attacks, though the president in fact condemned Hamas's "abhorrent attacks" three days after the assault.

While campuses are at the center of the clash over pro-Palestinian speech, human rights groups and other non-academic institutions have also been targeted by harassment campaigns. A co-leader of local solidarity group Rochester Witness Palestine, who requested anonymity due to safety concerns, told Jewish Currents that Ahmad Abuznaid, the executive director of the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR), was scheduled to give an in-person keynote speech in Rochester, New York, during an October 13th event. The speech was slated to be held at an Islamic center in Rochester; however, the center had to pull out of hosting the event because of threats it received. (Abuznaid spoke online instead.) Such concerns have also affected other events in Rochester, with a Palestinian film festival organized by Witness Palestine also being moved online after the host theater pulled out for safety reasons.

The Rochester talk featuring Abuznaid was not the only USCPR event that was affected. In Texas, a Hilton hotel canceled the group's upcoming conference, saying that it posed "potential risks to our Team Members and guests." But the hotel did not cite "any specific threats or provid[e] any record of the threats received," Abuznaid said, noting that "without any of that information, it's hard to believe they didn't simply cave to anti-Palestinian racists." Texas Governor Greg Abbott praised the hotel for canceling an event he said was put on by "Hamas supporters," adding that "no location in Texas should host or sponsor USCPR." Meanwhile, in Virginia, the Council on American Islamic Relations, the largest Muslim American civil rights group, said it had to move the location of an annual banquet because, after it updated the event programming to focus on Palestinian human rights, the hotel hosting the event received calls from anonymous people threatening "to plant bombs in the hotel's parking garage, kill specific hotel staff in their homes, and storm the hotel."

As the Israeli bombing of Gaza continues with no end in sight, Sainath said she is bracing for more such instances. "The repression we're seeing is different in nature and more intense than anything we have witnessed in recent years," she said. At the same time, Sainath predicts the crackdown on speech won't stop dissent. "People of conscience—particularly of the youngest generations—are continuing to speak out despite immense personal risk," she said.

A longer version of this article originally appeared at jewishcurrents.org.

REVEREND BILLY'S REVELATIONS

Dear Rev,
Sometimes when we're on the streets with all the opposition shouting, I wonder what happened to graciousness or restraint. Is it even possible these days? Can you imagine... courtesy?

HACKETT
Flatbush, Brooklyn

Yes there are standards, even in today's world.

With conservatives, friendliness is often more powerful than aggression. Try it! Add fearlessness to the friendliness and you can break down MAGA types. With police, my advice is to make them laugh or show any outward emotion at all, and things get better. You know so many of the cops are damaged veterans, and many are very lonely.

Democrats who bank at Chase and want their kids to go to Harvard — now they are the lying scum of the Earth and are beyond the reach of courtesy. Hackett, my best advice is to Will Smith 'em in the face... Then hose 'em down with diseased excrement from the pollution of their own factories while screaming "IN 2023 MODERATION IS MURDER!" Of course, the factory part takes research.

Good luck!
REV

• • •

Dear Sir,
I find as the news comes in that NOTHING IS TRUE! Words are not what they used to be. The stupidest ads are as truth-telling as Joe Biden. We're living inside a swarm of falsehoods. Please address this situation. But then again, will I believe you?

AMEYA
Binghamton, NY

Dear Ameya,
I believe YOU! You are telling the truth. But you know, calling it all a lie is the easy part — of course it's all a lie. Militarism is based on lies. (Iraq was launched with a comedy sketch. Afghanistan had no explanation at all.) Religions offer God-narratives that are outright nonsense, but like the wars millions of innocents suffer pain and early death as a result. And we carry the psychic weight of saturation advertising throughout our day, scores of simultaneous product claims assaulting us, delivered by 70-foot tall supermodels from the sides of buildings.

We walk around in a conspiracy theory the size of the atmosphere. No wonder that we don't seem to believe that the monster storms and wildfires actually happen. The fascinating question is, how would we get the truth across to each other? How do we take a truth and carry it to our fellow humans? When the truth comes to us, and it might be the key to Peace, it might be a decisive step toward Justice. Do we hear it in a loving whisper, or in a scream from the Earth?

Yours Truly!
BILLY

REVEREND BILLY TALEN IS THE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF STOP SHOPPING. HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE REVEREND? EMAIL REVBILLY@REVBILLY.COM AND UNBURDEN YOUR SOUL.

Theater for the New City
CRYSTAL FIELD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Village Halloween Costume Ball
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2023
3:30-8:00pm outside on E. 10th St (bet 1st & 2nd Aves)
8:00pm-12:00am inside at 155 1st Avenue
COSTUME PARADE & LIVE BANDS
MIRACLES & MONSTERS
COLD DRINKS & HOT ENTERTAINMENT
COME SEE AND BE SEEN!
3:30 PM: PERFORMANCES OUTSIDE
4:15 PM: ART LILLARD'S HEAVENLY BIG BAND
5:45 PM: COSTUME PARADE & CONTEST
6:30 PM: MR. PABLO LATIN DANCE BAND
7:45 PM: THE RED & BLACK MASQUE
8:00 PM: PERFORMANCES & AERIAL DANCE INSIDE
For more info:
Call (212) 254-1109
www.theaterforthenewcity.net
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Instagram: @theater_for_the_new_city
Tickets $20
Outside Performances Free

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Fight the right.
NYC-DSA is multiracial, working-class organization fighting for the better world we know is possible.
Join us.
socialists.nyc
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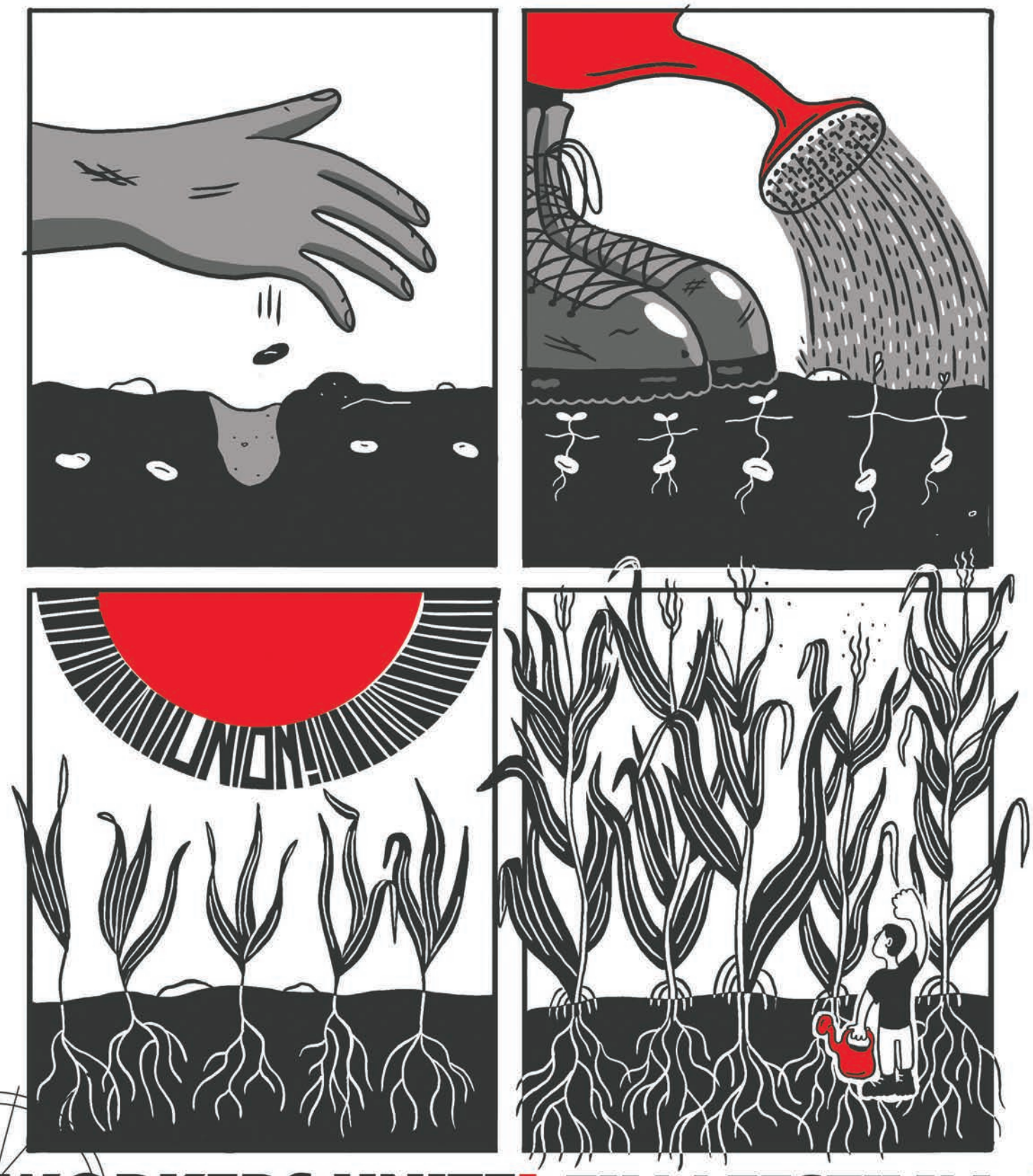
NYC DSA
NEW YORK CITY



WORKERS UNITE! FILM FESTIVAL 12

OCT 27 - NOV 12 • WORKERSUNITEFILMFESTIVAL.ORG

WEEK 1 - LIVE AT CINEMA VILLAGE (22 E 12TH ST) - VIRTUAL STARTS 11/3

SPECIAL EVENT: ENTERTAINMENT LABOR UPSURGE 2023 - STRIKE TEACH-IN AT SUNY EMPIRE 11/15

FRIDAY 10/27 (OPENING)

More Perfect Union: Shorts Series
- Frontline films from the SAG-AFTRA, WGA, and UAW Strikes

Stonebreakers - American monuments and myth, reclamation of space

SATURDAY 10/28

Honorable But Broken: EMS In Crisis

The Revolt of the Good Guys
- Letter carriers strike against federal government in '70s! NALC members

Storming Caesars Palace - Welfare '70s

SUNDAY 10/29

The Kill Floor, The Devil's Avocado + Climate Short

Revolutionary Hearts - Lifelong community activism

Rabble Rousers: Frances Goldin & the Fight for Cooper Sq
- The 50 yr battle against gentrification of the Lower East Side

MONDAY 10/30

Farmer-Labor Party

There Goes the Neighborhood - More NYC housing rights

City of Steel

TUESDAY 10/31

Fight Like Hell: The Testimony of Mother Jones - Based on play

Smile As You Kill
- Healthcare ... or else.

WEDNESDAY 11/1

A Thousand Pines - Reforestation

Where Have All the Smiles Gone? Made In Italy (By the Chinese), Men In Blue - Migrant experience

THURSDAY 11/2

SVA SocDoc Shorts

The American Dream and Other Fairy Tales
- with Abigail Disney

FULL SCHEDULE + LIVE EVENT TICKETS: **bit.ly/TixWUFF12** SELECT FILMS VIRTUAL NOV 3-10